

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /064 W  
-----171230Z 112409 /50

R 170907Z JUN 77 ZFG  
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3104  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SOFIA 1316

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, CVIS, SHUM, CSCE, BU  
SUBJECT: BULGARIA CLEARS THE DECKS ON DIVIDED FAMILIES

REF: A) SOFIA 1294; B) 75 SOFIA A-111; C) 76 SOFIA A-52; D) SOFIA  
1951; E) SOFIA A-14

1. BECAUSE INDIVIDUAL MESSAGES ON DIVIDED FAMILY CASES UNDER-  
STANDABLY ARE NOT BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF POLICY OFFICERS, WE  
WOULD LIKE TO SUMMARIZE HERE SOME INSTANCES WHERE BULGARIAN  
AUTHORITIES HAVE RESORTED TO UNUSUAL MEASURES TO GET CASES  
OFF THEIR DOCKET BEFORE THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE.

2. REF A REPORTED CONCLUSION OF CASE OF A MINOR CHILD WHICH  
EMBASSY HAD BEEN TOLD WAS "APPROVED" BUT WHERE THE PASSPORT  
OFFICE IN PLOVDIV HAD NOT ONLY DENIED THE PASSPORT APPLICA-  
TION BUT REJECTED AN APPEAL. WE ENCOURAGED THE RELATIVES TO  
GO TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND POINT OUT THAT SPONSORS  
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IN US HAD BEEN TOLD CHILD APPROVED FOR TRAVEL.  
WHEN THE RELATIVES RETURNED TO THEIR TOWN LAST WEEK "THEY  
FOUND A MILITIA OFFICER IN FRONT OF THEIR HOUSE WAITING  
TO INFORM THEM THAT PASSPORT FOR THE CHILD HAD ALREADY  
BEEN ISSUED." THIS WAS ESPECIALLY UNUSUAL BECAUSE THE FEE  
HAD NOT YET BEEN PAID, AND LATER THEY LEARNED THAT CHIEF  
OF PLOVDIV PASSPORT OFFICE HAD USED HIS OWN MONEY TO PAY

THE FEE. ONE CAN IMAGINE UNDER WHAT PRESSURE HE MUST HAVE BEEN TO DO THIS.

2. THE MAREV CASE, ON WHICH WE HAVE HAD EXTENSIVE EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES, IS OF COURSE THE MOST PROMINENT CASE OF THIS KIND. THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT HAD FORMALLY TOLD US THAT THE CHILDREN DID NOT WANT TO BE REUNITED WITH THEIR PARENTS WHOM THEY REGARDED AS "STRANGERS". A PROPOSAL THAT THE MOTHER COME HERE TO CONVINCE HERSELF OF THAT FACT WAS TURNED DOWN BY THE PARENTS IN AMERICA. YET THE BULGARIANS FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO "PERSUADE" THE CHILDREN TO GO TO AMERICA. DIFFICULTIES ABOUT HAVING THEM COMPLETE THEIR SCHOOL TERM EVAPORATED. SAME WITH DIFFICULTIES ABOUT ISSUING THEM PASSPORTS, WHICH WERE HAND-CARRIED TO SOFIA BY A PROVINCIAL OFFICIAL IN TIME FOR DEPARTURE DATE WHICH WE HAD SUGGESTED. THE MOST OBDURATE MFA OFFICIAL WITH WHOM WE HAD DEALT ON THIS CASE SUDDENLY BECAME MOST EAGER TO SEE THE CHILDREN LEAVE.

3. BUT THERE ARE OTHER CASES AS WELL, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED SO ROUTINELY THAT THE POLITICAL OVERTONES WERE NOT HIGHLIGHTED. TAKE FOR INSTANCE NEDA GUCUNSKA (NO. 19 ON 1975 LIST, REF B), A LADY WHO TOLD US SHE DOES NOT WANT TO TRAVEL TO THE US TO VISIT HER HUSBAND, WHOM SHE HAS NOT SEEN FOR 16 YEARS, "BECAUSE SHE IS NOT SURE HE WILL ALLOW HER TO RETURN TO BULGARIA" (REF C). HOWEVER, SHE WAS CALLED TO THE MILITZIA OFFICE AND TOLD RPT TOLD TO GO TO THE PASSPORT OFFICE TO MAKE AN APPLICATION. (OBVIOUSLY, IF SHE DOESN'T WANT TO LEAVE WE ON OUR PART CONFIDENTIAL

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WILL NOT ENCOURAGE HER TO DO SO.) BEING TOLD TO MAKE A PASSPORT APPLICATION IS A HIGHLY UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE IN THE HISTORY OF OUR DIVIDED FAMILY CASES.

4. WE WOULD PUT IN THE SAME GENERAL CATEGORY OF POLITICAL "PUSH" THE CASE OF LYUDMILA POPOVA-WIGHTMAN (REF D) WHO HAD BEEN REFUSED PASSPORT TO JOIN HER HUSBAND, POSSIBLY BECAUSE HER PREVIOUS HUSBAND HAD BEEN ENGAGED IN SENSITIVE WORK HERE. THE CASE WAS HAPPILY RESOLVED IN MARCH. WE DID NOT REPORT THEN, BUT BELIEVE IT NOT WITHOUT SIGNIFICANCE, THAT ACCORDING TO MRS. POPOVA-WIGHTMAN HER HUSBAND STATED IN A TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE US THAT HE INTENDED TO ENLIST ASSISTANCE OF THE WHITE HOUSE. TWO DAYS LATER SHE HAD HER PASSPORT. WE THOUGHT THIS A COINCIDENCE, BUT IN VIEW OF THE OTHER CASES WE NOW BELIEVE THERE PROBABLY WAS A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PHONE CALL AND THE RESOLUTION.

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AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SOFIA 1316

5. YET ANOTHER CASE OF THIS SORT WAS THAT OF VASILA  
IVANOVA (NO. 23 ON OUR 1975 LIST), A CASE THAT HAD BEEN  
LANGUISHING BECAUSE SHE DECLINED TO GO TO THE PASSPORT  
OFFICE DESPITE BEING SUMMONED THERE SEVERAL TIMES.. PROBABLY A CASE OF

TIMIDITY. MRS. IVANOVA WAS ESCORTED TO THE PASSPORT OFFICE BY A  
MILITZIA  
OFFICER TO MAKE HER APPLICATION. SHE IS NOW IN THE US.  
(WE HAD REPORTED ONLY THE RESOLUTION OF THE CASE IN  
REF E BUT NOT THE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH IT  
WAS RESOLVED.) YET ANOTHER CASE WITH ALMOST THE SAME  
PATTERN, WAS THAT OF KINDA BEZEVA (NO. 6 ON OUR 1975  
LIST, REF B) WHO WAS CALLED INTO MILITZIA OFFICE AND  
TOLD RPT TOLD TO MAKE AN APPLICATION AT THE PASSPORT OFFICE.  
THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN OTHER CASES OF SUDDEN URGENCY ALTHOUGH  
THEY WERE SOMEWHAT LESS DRAMATIC IN THEIR RESOLUTION.

6. WHILE IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO GENERALIZE FROM THESE  
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CASES AND TO SAY THAT CURRENT GOB POLICY IS TO APPROVE ALL DIVIDED FAMILY CASES, THERE IS ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THE GOB IS ANXIOUS TO CLEAR THE DECKS FOR BELGRADE IN A MAJOR WAY. THE RECORD IS FAIRLY CONCLUSIVE. BUT THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS, AND THERE ARE CROSS-CURRENTS: WE STILL HAVE SOME DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED CASES THAT ARE UNRESOLVED, AND NEW ONES ARE ARISING ALL THE TIME. WE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TOLD BY HIGH MFA OFFICIALS THAT GOB OBJECTS TO OUR INFORMING BULGARIAN CITIZENS THAT DOCUMENTS BEARING ON THEIR TRAVEL HAVE ARRIVED AT THE EMBASSY, AND THE HEAD OF THE MFA CONSULAR DEPARTMENT TOLD THE AMBASSADOR EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT GOB "WILL NOT FORCE BULGARIAN CITIZENS TO TRAVEL", BY WHICH HE MEANT THAT GOB HAS NO DUTY EVEN TO INFORM LONGSTANDING CASES THAT THEY WERE APPROVED FOR TRAVEL. OBVIOUSLY IN THIS MATTER THE POLICY IS NOT UNIFORMLY APPLIED.

7. IT IS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT AND ALSO SPECULATIVE TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BULGARIAN CHAIN OF COMMAND, ESPECIALLY SINCE EACH CASE IS DIFFERENT AND THE PATTERN OF OFFICIAL BULGARIAN BEHAVIOR IS NOT UNIFORM. BUT OUR BEST ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION IS THAT THE TOP LEADERSHIP WANTS AS MANY AS POSSIBLE (WITH A HANDFUL OF EXCEPTIONS LIKE INKIOW) TO BE RESOLVED QUICKLY, WHEREAS THE BUREAUCRACY DOWN THE LINE IS STILL IMBUED WITH THE OLDTIME RELIGION WHICH SAYS THAT "ENEMIES OF THE STATE" (I.E., PEOPLE WHO LEFT THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY) MUST NOT BE "REWARDED" BY HAVING THEIR RELATIVES ALLOWED TO JOIN THEM. THERE IS ALSO THE PERENNIAL FOUL-UP FACTOR PRESENT IN ANY BUREAUCRACY, WITH SOME PEOPLE NOT GETTING THE WORD. BUT IN THE LONG RUN, THE OLDTIME RELIGION WILL PROBABLY CELEBRATE A MAJOR REVIVAL. OUR GUESS IS THAT THAT WILL HAPPEN JUST AFTER THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE, BUT IT COULD HAPPEN EARLIER.

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## Message Attributes

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